(v) To boost steel exports, rationlisation of DEPB rates has been carried out.

Demand and supply of steel

899. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the details of demand and supply of steel during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether there has been shortfall in production of steel during the said period;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the manner in which Government propose to meet the demand fully;

(c) whether the steel industries have represented that the demand of steel is sluggish due to fiscal policies;

(f) if so, the details in this regard; and

(g) the details of steps taken, till date by Government to help the steel industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) The details of production, demand and suppy of finished steel in the country during the last three years are as below:

		Year	(in million tonnes)
Finished steel	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001
Domestic Demand	23.54	25.02	26.65
Production	23.82	26.71	29.70 (Prov)

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

(e) and (f) The Steel Industry has been representing to the Govt, regarding sluggish growth in the demand for steel, the main reasons for which are:

(i) Inadequate Govt, expenditure on infrastructure;

(ii) Sluggish demand in the steel consuming sectors;

(iii) Overall economic slowdown in the country;

(iv) Concessional rate of duty on steel imports for infrastructure projects;

(v) Blockade of export markets due to Anti-Dumping/CVD duties on exports of steel from India by developed countries.

(g) Government have taken several steps to help industry in the country, which *inter-alia* include the following:

Higher Allocation for infrastructure and housing in the last two Budgets.

— A National Campaign for increasing the demand of steel, especially in non-traditional sectors, such as, rural and agro-based industrial sector has been launched.

— Rationalisation of duties of raw materials for steel making.

— Rationalisation Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) rates for steel exports have been carried out to boost exports.

— Setting up a 'Steel Exporters Forum' to help exporters to overcome bottlenecks in exports.

— Anti-dumping duty on Hot Rolled coils imported from Ukraine and Russia to check imports.

Jobs to kith and kins of employees in B.S.P.

† 900. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that jobs are not being provided to the kith and kins of the employees working in Bhilai Steel Plant in case they are found medically unfit; and

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.